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haps the main reason for this unsatisfactory approach to the problem of living was that, although things could be evaluated easily, it was difficult to assess the value of human beings. Some progress had been made in the assessment of nutrition, an index of the physical condition, and of intelligence, an index of mental capacity; but satisfactory indices had yet to be devised of temperament and character. The discovery of such indices and methods of measurement would make possible great advances in the estimation of our human resources. Periodical surveys of representative groups, by the method of random sampling, would give information about the quality of our people and of changes in this quality, whether for better or for worse.

A beginning could be made even now by a systematic stocktaking in all schools throughout the country, to determine how many children fell below a defined level of sub-normal intelligence. This would give us some idea of the magnitude of one highly important element in the composition of our social problems. There was good reason to believe that the dull and retarded elements of the population were the soil from which sprang the men, women and children who, by reasons of defect and disability in body, mind and character, sooner or later became a serious drag on their fellow citizens.

Turning now to the standard of living in the generally accepted sense of the term, Dr. Caradog Jones said it was possible to

estimate the average standard at which certain representative classes lived if "living" was defined as the things on which they spent their money. A comparison could then be made at three social levels: middle class, working class, and a class below the poverty line. It was possible also to estimate the minimum weekly income required for subsistence by a family of any given composition. A tendency could be noted for the subsistence standard to rise with the general standard of living, showing that subsistence was related in part to custom as well as to primary need.

The scale of living in this narrow sense was thus measured by means of money, and this could readily be created by the Government; but the arts of living were not merely a matter of making money. True, there was no assignable limit to the potential rise in the standard of living when this was interpreted in material terms. But whether man would prove capable of taking advantage of Nature's bounty depended at bottom upon the quality of the people, their skill of hand and brain, their power of organization and adaptation, above all their moral fibre and integrity of character.

This bare summary does not purport to do justice to a paper of considerable eugenic and sociological importance. It is offered in the expectation and hope that readers will feel impelled, by its many inadequacies, to turn for enlightenment to the pamphlet itself.

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haps the most noteworthy, if not unexpected, feature about the pregnancy figures is the close association between subfertility and the tendency to miscarry which will be seen again in our table of results. In considering efforts at contraception before the first visit it is of interest to compare these two groups again (see Table III) :

TABLE III

CONTRACEPTION BEFORE FIRST VISIT IN 389 SUBFERTILE
AND 300 FERTILE WOMEN

Contraceptive history	Subfertile	Fertile
Not used, or used for less than 3 months	108 (28%)	27 (9%)
Used for 3 months or longer—		
Coitus interruptus only ...	107 (27%)	115 (38%)
Sheath, cap, and/or chemical	141 (36%)	141 (47%)
Inadequate data	33 (9%)	17 (6%)

This does not suggest that the use of contraceptives induces sterility, but rather that the superfertile woman makes somewhat fruitless efforts to control her fertility by using birth control of one sort or another.

We have attempted to keep in touch with all the patients who have been investigated or treated in any way, but as always, and more particularly owing to the mobility imposed on many wives by war-time conditions, a number have vanished. Of the 389

women in the subfertile group rather more than 100 have either not been seen since their first visit or have apparently given up the idea of continuing investigation and treatment and have been lost trace of. Of those about whom we have news 135 have conceived on one or more occasions.

Those pregnancies that have terminated have done so as follows :

Live births—74 (3 the result of artificial insemination).

Still births or miscarriages—46.

29 are at present known to be pregnant (one the result of artificial insemination).

It is our custom to ask patients who have achieved a child to send us a photograph of the offspring. Proud mothers quite often being their infants to the clinic and take great pleasure in exhibiting them to the as yet barren but hopeful crowd in the waiting-room.

The degree of successes as indicated by the above figures may appear meagre in proportion to the work involved. The compensation, however, lies in the fascination of exploring this still incompletely charted territory, the pathetic gratitude of the parents, and the gardener's satisfaction in having made a blade of grass grow where none grew before.

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epileptics from non-deteriorated epileptics. While ordinary idiocy, imbecility and feeble-mindedness do not seem to be correlated with any peculiarities of the dermatoglyphics, mongoloid idiots show marked differences both on fingers and palms. Finally, patients who have had infantile paralysis (*poliomyelitis*) show a lessened asymmetry between the two hands, while the sex differences persist.

This selection of apparently disconnected

facts will be sufficient to show that dermatoglyphics present a highly complex problem, and it is obvious that the key to this problem has not yet been found. The reviewer is convinced that this key will eventually be found in very detailed embryological studies, and that a real insight into the developmental mechanisms of ridge patterns will be necessary to bring some semblance of order into their peculiar though orderly behaviour.

H. G. HILL.

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